



## Attendance and Absence Policy

**Policy #**  
2-101

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<b>Category:</b>	2-Attendance and Absence
<b>Curriculum Phase:</b>	All Phases
<b>Author/Authoring Body:</b>	Curricular and Student Affairs
<b>Responsible Unit:</b>	Curricular and Student Affairs
<b>Policy Contact:</b>	Student Affairs Dean Office
<b>Next Review Year:</b>	2024

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### Summary

This policy establishes guidelines and procedures for attendance and absences for mandatory classroom and clinical activities in the Preclerkship Phase, all clerkship experiences in the Clerkship Phase, and all activities identified for a course in the Transition to Residency Phase.

### Related LCME Standard: 12.4 Student Access to Health Care Services

A medical school provides its medical students with timely access to needed diagnostic, preventive, and therapeutic health services at sites in reasonable proximity to the locations of their required educational experiences and has policies and procedures in place that permit students to be excused from these experiences to seek needed care.

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### Applicability & Scope

This policy applies to medical students across all phases of the curriculum.

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### Definitions

**Preclerkship Phase** – This curriculum phase of study is defined as the first 18-months of medical school with focus on the 8 basic sciences core courses, Doctor and Patient/Societies course, and the Clinical Reasoning course, including all Pathways to Health and Medicine curriculum sessions intertwined throughout the core courses.

**Clerkship Phase** – This curriculum phase of study is defined as the 12-months of 7 core clerkship courses, including Intersessions, Transition to Clerkships, and ambulatory medicine course.

**Transition to Residency Phase** – This curriculum phase of study is defined as the final 14-months of clinical curriculum, including core sub-internship, electives, surgical subspecialty, emergency medicine/critical care courses, Application of the Basic Sciences to Clinical Medicine course.

**Extenuating Personal Circumstances** – Extenuating personal circumstances may include, without limitation, significant family or personal events that acutely disrupt the student's ability to attend course or clinical responsibilities.

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## Policy Statement

### I. Attendance and Absence Policy for Preclerkship Phase

This policy establishes guidelines and procedures for attendance and absences in the Preclerkship Phase for mandatory classroom and clinical activities. Participation in learning activities is critical for students to develop into effective physicians. It is important for students to act in a professional manner and demonstrate a commitment to professional responsibilities.

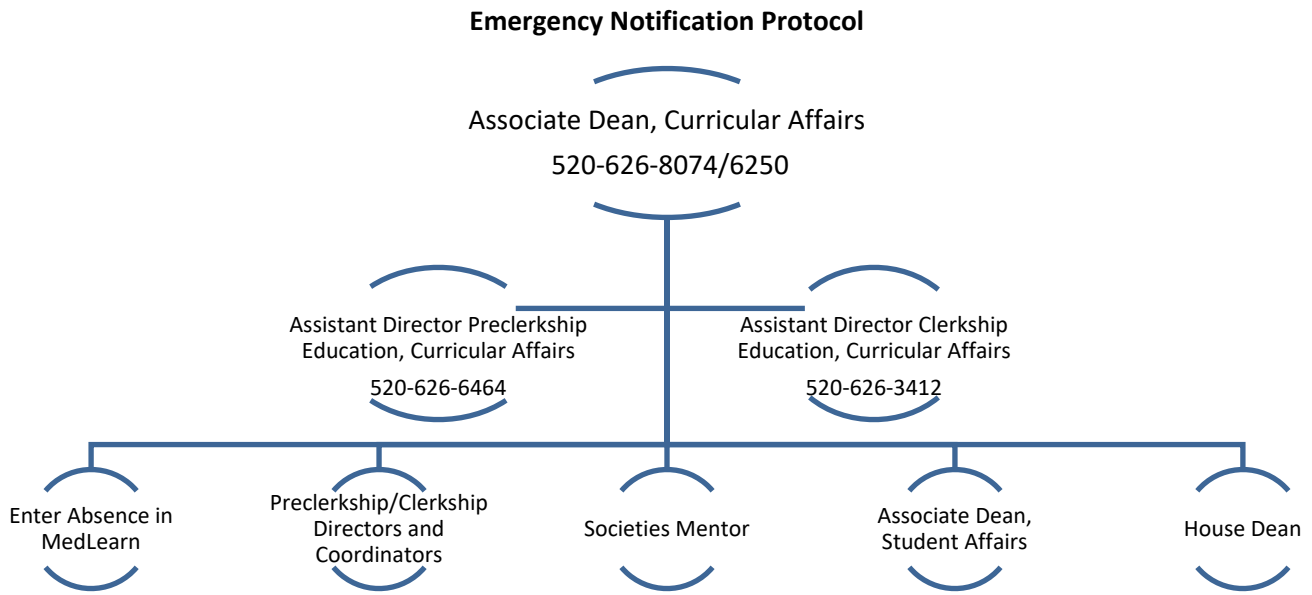
- Attendance at all small-group sessions, all sessions in which patients are present, and all interprofessional activities is mandatory.
- Attendance is mandatory at any other activity that has been announced as being required.
- The student must request an excused absence a minimum of two weeks in advance and must be recorded in MedLearn (see Procedure for Reporting and Tracking Absences).
- Attendance at all exams is mandatory. This includes course exams, retake exams, exams for course remediation, OSCE, NBME and any other scheduled exam.
- Attendance Sign-In Sheet/Form: Signing-in or submitting an attendance sheet/form for another student is unethical and considered an Honor Code Policy violation. Students may ONLY sign-in/submit attendance sheet/form for themselves and no other student.

#### A. Excused Absences:

- 1) **Illness.** In the case of a student's own illness or injury, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that an absence request is submitted to the Course Director in a timely manner. A note may be required from Campus Health or a primary care provider.
- 2) **Presentation at a professional conference.** An excused absence may be granted for a student to present at a professional conference. Conference attendance alone, without presentation responsibilities, does not meet the requirements for an excused absence. Proof of acceptance to the conference where the student is presenting must be provided.
- 3) **Leadership activity.** An excused absence may be granted for a student to represent the University of Arizona College of Medicine in a leadership capacity at a professional conference or meeting (for example, as an elected representative of UACOM on an AMSA committee). Conference attendance alone, without leadership responsibilities, does not meet the requirements for an excused absence.
- 4) **Religious observance.** An excused absence may be granted for a student to observe a religious holiday, in accordance with University policy.
- 5) **Jury Duty.** An excused absence may be granted for a student to fulfill this civic responsibility.
- 6) **Bereavement.** An excused absence may be granted for up to three (3) days because of the death of student's spouse, parent (natural parent, step-parent, adoptive parent), parent-in-law, sibling, child (natural child, adoptive child, foster- child, step-child), grandparents, grandchildren, brother or sister-in-law, or any other person who is a member of the student's household. A student may be granted up to two (2) additional days in order to attend or arrange funeral services out-of-state. If a student requires an

excused absence for more than five (5) days, the student must request a Leave of Absence with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.

In the event of extenuating personal circumstances, students can contact the Associate Dean of Curricular Affairs, who will activate the Emergency Notification Protocol on behalf of the student.



**B. Personal Day Passes:**

- 1) Students are allowed up to three (3) Personal Day Passes during the Preclerkship Phase to attend to personal business, weddings, reunions, or other events that are not included on the list of recognized excused absences.
- 2) Students must submit a request for a Personal Day Pass to the course director/Societies director a minimum of two weeks in advance. The request must be approved by the course/Societies director. Student will receive final approval by email from the Associate Dean for Students Affairs.
- 3) Personal Day Passes may not be taken for the following:
  - a) Course exams
  - b) Retake exams
  - c) Exams for course remediation
  - d) OSCE
  - e) NBME exams
  - f) Other scheduled exams
  - g) Interprofessional activities
- 4) No half days or hour counts are permitted.
- 5) Personal Day Passes are non-transferrable.
- 6) A specific reason for a Personal Day Pass is not required.

- 7) Approval is not guaranteed but will depend on the nature of the missed sessions and whether the sessions can be remediated, if deemed necessary, by the course director and/or societies mentor.
  - 8) After the use of three (3) Personal Day Passes within the Preclerkship Phase, any additional absence that does not meet the criteria for an excused absence will be considered an unexcused absence.
- C. Unexcused Absences and Consequences of Unexcused Absences:
- 1) Any non-emergency absence that is taken without prior notification or permission of the course director is considered an unexcused absence and will be treated as an act of unprofessional behavior.
  - 2) An unexcused absence will result in a score of zero on any graded activity (e.g., the IRAT and GRAT in a Team Learning session).
  - 3) One or more unexcused absences will result in a 10% deduction from the student's Professionalism grade for the course

## II. Attendance and Absence Policy for Clerkship Phase

This policy establishes guidelines and procedures for attendance and absences in the Clerkship Phase. Participation in learning activities is critical for students to develop into effective physicians. It is important for students to act in a professional manner and demonstrate a commitment to professional responsibilities.

- All clerkship experiences are mandatory including NBME Shelf Exams, Transition to Clerkships and Intersessions 1 and 2.
- Any absence must be recorded in MedLearn (see Procedure for Reporting and Tracking Absences).
- Excused absences will be remediated as deemed appropriate by the clerkship director.
- To demonstrate that a student has remediated an absence, students will be expected to know the information and follow the requirements found in each clerkship manual.
- All absences must be requested a minimum of 30 days prior to the anticipated absence.
- Attendance Sign-In Sheet/Form: Signing-in or submitting an attendance sheet/form for another student is unethical and considered an Honor Code Policy violation. Students may ONLY sign-in/submit attendance sheet/form for themselves and no other student.

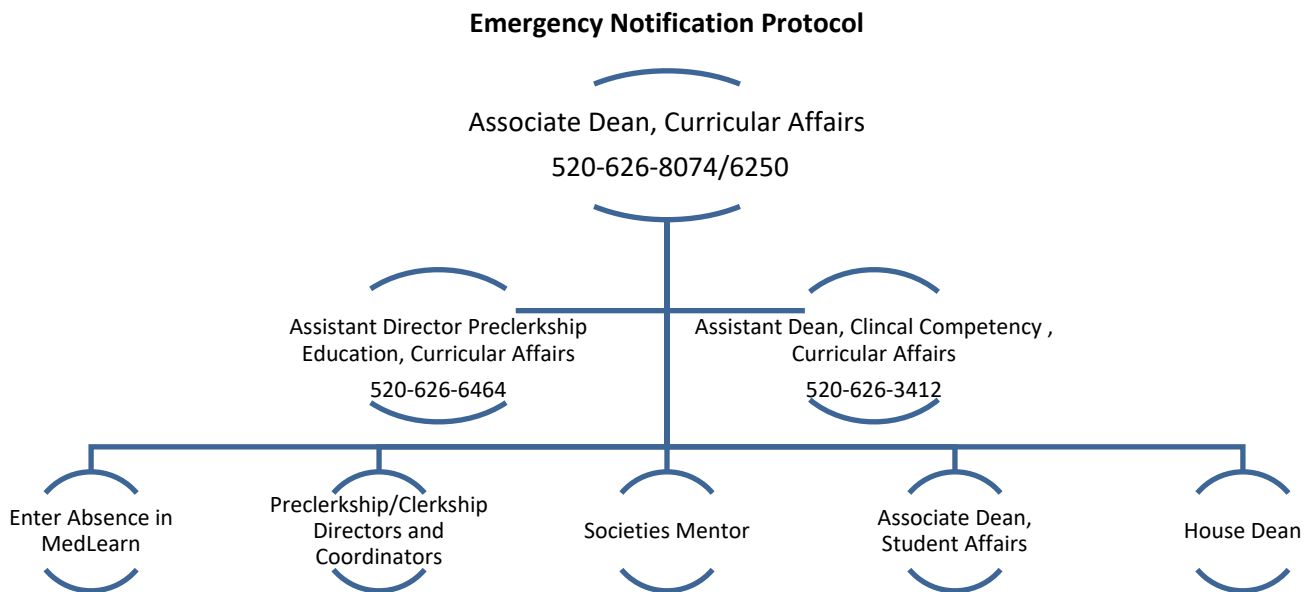
### A. Excused Absences:

- 1) **Illness.** In the case of a student's own illness or injury, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that an absence request is submitted to the clerkship director/clerkship coordinator in a timely manner. A note may be required from Campus Health or a primary care provider.
- 2) **Presentation at a professional conference.** An excused absence may be granted for a student to present at a professional conference. Conference attendance alone, without presentation responsibilities, does not meet the requirements for an excused absence. Proof of acceptance to the conference where the student is presenting must be provided to the clerkship. The number of days excused may not exceed those allowed in the absence policy for each clerkship.

- 3) **Leadership activity.** An excused absence may be granted for a student to represent the University of Arizona College of Medicine in a leadership capacity at a professional conference or meeting (for example, as an elected representative of UACOM on an AMSA committee). Conference attendance alone, without leadership responsibilities, does not meet the requirements for an excused absence.
- 4) **Religious observance.** An excused absence may be granted for a student to observe a religious holiday, in accordance with University policy.
- 5) **Jury Duty.** An excused absence may be granted for a student to fulfill this civic responsibility.
- 6) **Bereavement.** An excused absence may be granted for up to three (3) days because of the death of student's spouse, parent (natural parent, step-parent, adoptive parent), parent-in-law, sibling, child (natural child, adoptive child, foster- child, step-child), grandparents, grandchildren, brother or sister-in-law, or any other person who is a member of the student's household.

A student may be granted up to two (2) additional days in order to attend or arrange funeral services out-of-state. If a student requires an excused absence for more than five (5) days, the student must request a Leave of Absence with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.

In the event of extenuating personal circumstances, students can contact the Associate Dean of Curricular Affairs, who will activate the Emergency Notification Protocol on behalf of the student.



**B. Personal Day Passes:**

- 1) Students are allowed up to four (4) Personal Day Passes during the entire Clerkship Phase to attend to personal business, weddings, reunions, or other events that are not included on the list of recognized excused absences.

- 2) Students must submit a request for a Personal Day Pass a minimum of 30 days in advance to the clerkship director/coordinator and the request must be approved by the clerkship director/coordinator.
- 3) Personal Day Passes may be used only **once per clerkship rotation**. They may NOT be taken during the following:
  - a) Orientation
  - b) Last week of a clerkship rotation
  - c) Teaching/didactic days
  - d) OSCE
  - e) NBME exams
  - f) Other scheduled exams
  - g) Transition to Clerkships
  - h) Intersessions 1 & 2
- 4) No half-day or hour counts are permitted.
- 5) Personal Day Passes are non-transferrable.
- 6) A specific reason for a Personal Day Pass is not required.
- 7) Approval is not guaranteed but will depend on the nature of the missed sessions and whether the sessions can be remediated, if deemed necessary, by the clerkship director.
- 8) Absences may not exceed the maximum number of days allowed in a clerkship (see Procedure for Requesting and Tracking Absences).
- 9) Personal Day Passes are not applicable to the Transition to Residency Phase.
- 10) After the use of a Personal Day Pass during a clerkship, or after use of four (4) Personal Day Passes within the Clerkship Phase, any additional absence that does not meet criteria for an excused absence will be considered an unexcused absence.

*If there are extenuating circumstances, please refer to the policy for excused absences (Section II.A. Excused Absences). Students are encouraged to talk with their clerkship director regarding any concerns or special situations.*

C. Remediation of Excused Absences:

- 1) The clerkship directors will create a remediation plan that is specific to the unique requirements of their clerkship and that will apply to students at all sites within that clerkship.
- 2) In the event that: (1) an absence is requested 30 days in advance; and (2) the clerkship director is unable to arrange a remediation plan because of the student's prolonged absence or the clerkship director's inability to recreate the needed clinical or didactic material, the clerkship director may deny approval for the requested absence.
- 3) In the event that: (1) an absence due to illness or unanticipated events (i.e., 30 days advance notice is impossible); and (2) the clerkship director is unable to arrange a remediation plan because of a student's prolonged absence, or the clerkship director is unable to recreate the needed clinical or didactic material, the clerkship director, in consultation with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, may require the student to repeat the entire clerkship

D. Unexcused Absences and Consequences of Unexcused Absences:

- 1) Any non-emergency absence that is taken without prior notification or permission of the clerkship director is considered an unexcused absence. This will be treated as an act of unprofessional behavior which will be included in the student's final assessment.
- 2) An unexcused absence from clerkship didactics may be noted in the final assessment and may affect the student's final grade.
- 3) Students who do not appear for a regularly scheduled NBME Shelf Exam because of an unexcused absence will not be allowed to reschedule the exam resulting in a grade of zero for the NBME Shelf Exam grade, which may lead to failure of the clerkship.

E. Holidays:

- 1) Clerkship sites will observe the [holiday schedule of the University of Arizona](#).
- 2) A student may request to work on a day designated as a holiday by the University of Arizona. Upon approval by the clerkship director in advance, the holiday day may be substituted for a regular non-holiday work day. Clarify with the clerkship coordinator or director if it is required to report for weekend service following a holiday at the end of the week.

### III. Attendance and Absence Policy for Transition to Residency Phase

This policy establishes guidelines and procedures for attendance and absences in the Transition to Residency Phase. Attendance is required at all activities identified for a course. The student must complete the amount of work in the course that matches the number of credit hours established for the course.

A. Excused Absences:

Acceptable reasons for excused absences include the following:

- 1) **Interviews for residency.** It is expected that students use discretionary days to schedule interviews. However, circumstances may occur such that an interview is unavoidable during a course, particularly for the months of November, December and January.
- 2) **Illness.** In the case of a student's own illness or injury, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that an absence request is submitted to the clerkship director/clerkship coordinator in a timely manner. A note may be required from Campus Health or a primary care provider.
- 3) **Presentation at a professional conference.** An excused absence may be granted for a student to present at a professional conference. Conference attendance alone, without presentation responsibilities, does not meet the requirements for an excused absence. Proof of acceptance to the conference where the student is presenting must be provided to the clerkship. The number of days excused may not exceed those allowed in the absence policy for each clerkship.
- 4) **Leadership activity.** An excused absence may be granted for a student to represent the University of Arizona College of Medicine in a leadership capacity at a professional conference or meeting (for example, as an elected representative of UACOM on an AMSA committee). Conference attendance alone, without leadership responsibilities, does not meet the requirements for an excused absence.

- 5) **Religious observance.** An excused absence may be granted for a student to observe a religious holiday, in accordance with University policy.
- 6) **Jury Duty.** An excused absence may be granted for a student to fulfill this civic responsibility.
- 7) **Bereavement.** An excused absence may be granted for up to three (3) days because of the death of student's spouse, parent (natural parent, step-parent, adoptive parent), parent-in-law, sibling, child (natural child, adoptive child, foster-child, step-child), grandparents, grandchildren, brother or sister-in-law, or any other person who is a member of the student's household.

A student may be granted up to two (2) additional days in order to attend or arrange funeral services out-of-state. If a student requires an excused absence for more than five (5) days, the student must request a Leave of Absence with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.

- B. Remediation of Excused or Unexcused Absence:
  - 1) If a student has an excused or unexcused absence, the student must arrange with the course director to complete an equivalent amount of work at an alternative time.
- C. Unexcused Absences and Consequences of Unexcused Absences:
  - 1) Unexcused absence(s) may result in a failure of the course at the discretion of the course director. The criteria for failure due to unexcused absence(s) will be communicated to students and written in course materials.
- D. Holidays:
  - 1) Students participating in courses in the Transition to Residency phase will observe the holiday schedule of the institution of their course or rotation.

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## Procedures

### I. Procedures for Requesting and Tracking Absences in the Preclerkship Phase

- A. Requesting An Absence:
  - 1) To request an absence from a mandatory course activity, except in cases of personal illness, injury, or emergency, students must consult the course director (or Societies mentor) no less than 2 weeks in advance of the anticipated absence.
  - 2) The student must enter all absence requests in MedLearn. This applies to excused and unexcused absences (including Personal Day Pass).
  - 3) The reason for the absence (except for Personal Day Pass) and the date(s) of the absence must be included in the request entered on MedLearn. A note may be required from Campus Health or a primary care provider in the case of illness.
  - 4) Student will receive final approval by email from the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.
  - 5) A student who misses any small group activity for any reason is responsible for notifying the student's facilitator/mentor and small-group members in advance of the absence.
  - 6) In the event of long term, serious medical or personal issues, the student should contact the Associate Dean for Student Affairs to request a [leave of absence](#).
- B. Tracking Absences:



- 1) The Associate Dean for Student Affairs will review the student absence reports, and if a student has a pattern of frequent absences from mandatory sessions, the student will be required to meet with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs to explain the reasons and discuss a plan for improvement in attendance.
- 2) The Associate Dean for Student Affairs shall present the data from student absence reports to the Tucson Curriculum Management Subcommittee (TCMS) on an annual basis so that trends in the data can be noted and discussed.

## II. Procedures for Requesting and Tracking Absences in the Clerkship Phase

### A. Requesting an Excused Absence:

- 1) To request an excused absence, except in cases of personal illness, injury, or emergency, students must send an email to the clerkship director/clerkship coordinator no less than **30 days in advance** of the anticipated absence. The reason for the absence (except for Personal Day Pass) and the date(s) of the absence must be included in the request.
- 2) If a student requests an excused absence due to illness or injury, he/she will contact the clerkship director/clerkship coordinator as soon as possible. A note may be required from Campus Health or a primary care provider.
- 3) The student must enter all absences in MedLearn. This applies to excused and unexcused absences (including Personal Day Pass).
- 4) The clerkship director or coordinator will inform the student of his or her decision regarding the request for an excused absence by email.
- 5) In the event of long term, serious medical or personal issues, the student should contact the Associate Dean for Student Affairs to request a [leave of absence](#).

### B. Tracking Absences:

- 1) The following indicates the maximum number of absences for clerkships of various lengths:

Length of Course	Maximum Allowed Absences
1 week	.5 days
2 weeks	1 day
3 weeks	1.5 days
4 weeks	2 days
6 weeks	3 days
8 weeks	4 days
12 weeks	6 days

- 2) If the number of absences exceeds the maximum allowed, the student will be required to repeat the clerkship.
- 3) The Associate Dean for Student Affairs will review the student absence reports, and if a student exhibits a pattern of excessive absences, the student will be required to meet with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs to explain the reasons and discuss a plan for improvement in attendance.

- 4) The Associate Dean for Student Affairs shall present the data from student absence reports to the Tucson Clinical Curriculum Subcommittee (TCCS) on an annual basis so that trends in the data can be noted and discussed.

### III. Procedures for Requesting and Tracking Absences in the Transition to Residency Phase

#### A. Requesting An Absence:

- 1) To request an excused absence, except in cases of personal illness, injury, or emergency, students must contact the course director no less than 30 days in advance of the anticipated absence. The reason for the absence and the date(s) of the absence must be included in the request.
- 2) The course director must approve an absence. The student should contact the course director in advance of the absence whenever possible.
- 3) Even if a request is made in advance, approval of an absence is not guaranteed. The course director may refuse to excuse an absence in the case where alternative experiences/work cannot be arranged such that the student cannot accomplish the course objectives.

#### B. Tracking Absences:

- 1) The following indicates the maximum number of absences for Transition to Residency courses of various lengths:

Length of Course	Maximum Allowed Absences
1 week	.5 days
2 weeks	1 day
3 weeks	1.5 days
4 weeks	2 days
6 weeks	3 days
8 weeks	4 days
12 weeks	6 days

- 2) If the number of absences exceeds the maximum allowed, the student will be required to repeat the course.

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#### Related Information

##### Policies

[COM-T Policy 2-102: Leave of Absence Policy](#)

##### Websites

University of Arizona Holiday Schedule: <http://www.arizona.edu/calendars-events>

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## Revision History

**11/29/2023:** The TEPC voted to approve revisions to increase Personal Day Passes during the Clerkship Phase.

**1/15/2020:** The TEPC voted to approve revisions to the policy, including adding a definition and details for extenuating personal circumstances, emergency notification protocol, and other minor clarifications.

**5/15/2019:** The TEPC voted to approve revisions to the policy, including adding definitions, increased number of personal day passes in the Preclerkship Phase, details on unexcused absences for NBME Shelf Exams, expanded policy on Transition to Residency Phase, and other minor clarifications.

**4/17/2019:** Policy revised.

**6/7/2017:** Policy revised.

**7/4/2016:** Policy revised.

**5/4/2016:** Policy revised.

**12/14/2011:** Policy revised.

**9/12/2011:** Policy revised.

**7/8/2009:** Policy adopted.